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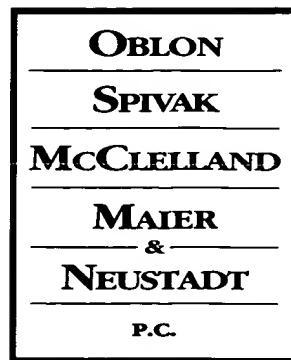


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Re: U.S. Application
Serial No: 09/667,502
Filed: September 22, 2000
Examiner: PATEL, P.
Group: 2829
Inventor: Masahito KOBAYASHI, et al.
For: PROBING METHOD AND
PROBING APPARATUS IN
WHICH STEADY LOAD IS
APPLIED TO MAIN CHUCK

SIR:

Attached hereto for filing are the following papers:

PROVISIONAL ELECTION OF SPECIES

Our check in the amount of **\$0.00** is attached covering any required fees. In the event that any variance exists between the amount enclosed and the Patent Office charges for filing the above-noted documents, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, please charge or credit our Deposit Account No. 15-0030. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for the necessary extension of time. A duplicate copy of this sheet is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599
Attorney of Record

Christopher D. Ward
Registration No. 41,367



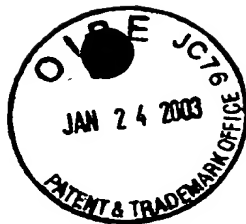
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF:

Masahito KOBAYASHI, et al.

SERIAL NO.: 09/667,502

FILED: September 22, 2000

FOR: PROBING METHOD AND
PROBING APPARATUS IN
WHICH STEADY LOAD IS
APPLIED TO MAIN CHUCK

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: EXAMINER: PATEL, P.

:

: GROUP ART UNIT: 2829

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#14/Election
Answer
1/29/03

PROVISIONAL ELECTION OF SPECIES

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

SIR:

In response to the Election of Species requirement dated December 27, 2002, the Applicants provisionally elect with traverse the species of Group (1) corresponding to Figures 2-3 and identifies Claims 1-3, 5-8, and 15-18 as readable on the provisionally elected species.

The Applicants respectfully traverse the election requirement based upon MPEP § 803, which states:

... If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

The claims of the present invention would appear to be part of an overlapping search area.

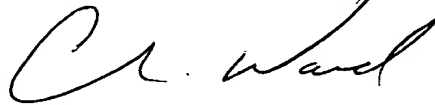
Furthermore, all of the claims of the present application have been examined in two previous Official Actions. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that the outstanding

Election requirement should be withdrawn on the grounds that a further search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the requirement to elect a single species be withdrawn, and that a full examination on the merits of Claims 1-19 be conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
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